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SUBJECT: COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY: USUN CONSULTATIONS
WITH THE CO-CHAIRMEN

REF: USUN 0977 AND USUN 1040

¶1. Summary. Ambassador Wolff met May 26 with the Co-Chairmen of the General Assembly Counter-terrorism Strategy consultations to discuss the next phase of work on the strategy. They plan to produce a discussion paper for consideration by the Group and sought U.S. views on some of the most sensitive issues being debated including, "root causes" and "state terrorism". They also raised the future of the Secretary General's Counter-terrorism task force. End Summary.

¶2. The Co-Chairmen, Spanish Permanent Representative Yanez-Barnuevo and Singaporean Permanent Representative Menon, described the recently completed two rounds of discussions during which delegations set forth positions on the Secretary General's Report, "Uniting against terrorism: recommendations for a global counter-terrorism strategy." The Co-Chairmen are now beginning a series of bilateral consultations with delegations, and will be preparing a paper for discussion during the next phase of open-ended consultations. The paper will contain the elements of a strategy. Yanez-Barnuevo noted that the Report has been criticized by some and their goal will be to extract those elements that are generally supported. They also plan to draw elements from the Outcome Document adopted by Heads of State in September 2005. He told Amb. Wolff that two aspects of the Report that he wanted to discuss were those related to root causes and the institutionalization of the Secretary General's Counter-terrorism task force.

¶3. Amb. Wolff said that the US favors a consensus strategy. We should avoid transferring problem issues from the Sixth Committee into the General Assembly discussion. There are ways of dealing with some issues such as "root causes" including the approach taken by the Report which had emphasized that certain conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists can contribute to the problem. He noted that the Report presented a good framework for progress on a strategy and if the General Assembly truly wants a role in counterterrorism, this would be a good opportunity for them to make progress in that direction. On the "institutionalization of the task force", Wolff said substituting structure for strategy puts the cart before the horse and we would have to see what added value would come from such a move.

¶4. The Singaporean Permanent Representative concurred that there was no reason to build a structure before a strategy but said that the task force was already functioning and playing a constructive role. He then asked for Wolff's views on the concept of "state terrorism" which some have claimed is an essential element for a strategy. Wolff responded that this was an unacceptable term which had been used in the debate to accuse certain states of terrorist acts. Amb. Wolff again reiterated that if some states continue to insist on politicizing the strategy, instead of focusing on concrete practical CT activities, the UNGA will have missed the chance

to contribute to the UN CT effort. He added that the time for negotiations of the strategy should not be open-ended.
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